

this Congress made a huge difference so that Americans can own their own homes. Some of the most important parts of this bill deal with the fact that, heretofore, the government has occasionally created obstacles to affordable housing by adding to its cost by regulations. By the time you have complied with all kinds of regulations, the housing is no longer affordable.

This bill that we will be voting on later today, H.R. 3899, establishes a benefit for those States and localities that eliminate the barriers, the costly requirements before one can build affordable housing. This bill creates a clearinghouse within HUD for those States and local units of government to learn how to make barriers less. It establishes a rule that no Federal agency can pass a regulation that puts a barrier effectively into building affordable housing without considering all possible alternatives that will make that barrier less. For those people who have had a dream to own a home in America, this bill is a substantial improvement. I commend it to all of our colleagues.

#### CONGRESS MUST ACT TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call on this Congress to pass legislation to strengthen our neighborhood public schools. We have heard people talk on the floor this morning about volume. Our children are told in the classroom it is the quality of their work, not the volume of the documents they produce. That ought to be true for this Congress as well. To go home without passing legislation to strengthen public education and to provide more teachers at the K-3 level, we have not put the quality in the legislation that we ought to pass. I know that because we have done it in my State. A lot of places we have not done it. A lot of places do not have the money. To say it is not needed is like saying we do not have a responsibility for our roads and a lot of other things we do.

We need to pass legislation to provide decent, safe, quality classrooms for our children. We can be accountable to the taxpayers, we can be accountable to our communities, but we can only be accountable if we do the job we were sent here to do. Our neighborhood public schools need our help now.

#### A MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT

(Mr. EWING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, Republicans in Congress have a message to the President: "Don't shut down the government." Republicans have been working with the administration since

last spring to avoid a government shutdown. I think we all agree it is not in the national interest to shut down the government. But how tragic it would be if the President were to force such a shutdown to divert attention from other matters or to use it for political purposes as we head into the mid-term elections. Republicans are willing to reach an honorable compromise with the White House on remaining differences just as we did last summer in order to pass the balanced budget amendment. Although there are still significant differences between the White House and the Republicans in Congress on the remaining spending bills, these differences can be resolved. In almost every case, the administration wants to spend more, the Republicans want to spend less. Let us find the common ground, avoid a government shutdown, and move on with the people's business.

#### EDUCATION EMERGENCY ACROSS AMERICA

(Mr. OWENS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, Public School 91 in my district was evacuated last Friday as a result of conditions that were deemed unsafe for children. You have got lead poisoning, a coal-burning furnace, everything you can imagine in that building which was built in 1903. It should have been closed a long time ago. But Public School 91 is not atypical of the school districts across America. In fact nearly every congressional district in America has an equivalent to Public School 91, a school that really needs to be closed or modernized or reconstructed.

We have an education emergency all across the United States. Why not bring our money back to our school districts? All money comes from the local areas, anyhow. Bring our Federal money back for school construction. One of my colleagues on the Education Committee keeps insisting that the school construction bill is tilted toward the urban areas. Well, yes, that is where most of the children in America live. The Vietnam Memorial Monument, if you look at the names on there, most of them come from the urban areas, too. All the wars that have existed, while we have not emphasized it, they come from where the population is. Schools modernization is needed all across America. Urban areas are just the beginning.

#### STILL WAITING FOR CONGRESS TO ACT

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 9 months ago the President and House Democrats laid out an education agenda for the 21st century. The American

people are still waiting for Congress to act.

Democrats want to help local governments modernize schools and help build and renovate 5,000 schools. The American people are still waiting for Congress to act.

The Democrats in Congress, the Democratic initiative wants to see smaller classrooms and more teachers. Yet the American people are still waiting for Congress to act.

Mr. Speaker, what is more important than education? What is more important than smaller classrooms? What is more important than more teachers teaching our children? Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the American people are still waiting for Congress to act.

#### AMERICAN STEEL IN A CRISIS

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, American steel is in a crisis. Yesterday the House of Representatives defeated a resolution to study the crisis. American steelworkers and their families do not need studies. They need action to stop the dumping of steel in this country. The dumping of steel is causing prices to drop, it is threatening the jobs of American steelworkers, it is threatening local economies, it is threatening our strategic industrial base, and, therefore, long-term threatens this country's ability to defend itself.

Americans need action to stop the dumping of steel. They need quantitative restrictions on allowing steel into the U.S. market. They need the application of countervailing duties. We do not need more studies. We need action. Stop the dumping of steel in this country. Save the steelworkers' jobs. Protect the American economy.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I serve as a cochair on the Democratic side of the aisle together with the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) on the Task Force on Education. We have served for over a year and a half. That agenda was created because we were responding to the needs of the people throughout the country. One of the top things they talked about was the need for additional teachers, additional qualified teachers and to do something about our crumbling classrooms and the inadequate infrastructure. This is something that has been on our agenda for over a year and a half. This year we did not even see the education budget come to the floor so that we could debate it, so that we could ask this country to fund this program. Now we are